(b) Yes, Sir. A Public Grievances Committee, headed by a Superintendent, was set up in Passport Office, Bangalore w.e.f. 1st May, 1997. The committee meets between 2.30 PM and 5.15 PM on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday each month wherein the grievances of the public are attended to. A Complaint/Grievances Box is also placed in the public area. In any case, the Passport Officer meets the public every day for day to day disposal of grievances. The Committee was meant as a supplementary institutional mechanism for grievance redressal.

(c) Only 4 complaints have been received so far, mainly, relating to delay in issue of passports. In all these cases, passports were issued after completion of documents.

(d) No, Sir. However, a few verbal complaints were received about the impolite behaviour fo the Karnataka State Police Security Guards who have since been changed.

(e) The Committee has now been upgraded to a Public Grievances Cell in the Passport Office to exclusively deal with the complaints received from the public wherein such complaints and the grievances of the public will be dealt with on a day to day basis.

Pending Cases in Labour Courts

28. SHRI VIJAY PATEL:

SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases pending in Labour Courts and High Courts concerning labour disputes in the country, particularly, in Gujarat;

(b) the steps taken to expedite settlement of pending cases;

(c) whether a number of vacancies of Presiding Judges exists in the State of Gujarat;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps Government propose to take to fill up these vacancies; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Oral Cancer

29. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the alarming rise in the cases of oral cancer in the country;

(b) if so, the number of patients suffering from oral cancer detected during last one year as compared to that in the previous year;

(c) the reasons for rise in the cases; and

(d) the details of steps taken to provide proper treatment to the patients who are suffering from oral cancer?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) to (c) Accoding to the five urban population based cancer registries (Mumbai, Bangalore, Madras, Delhi and Bhopal) functioning under NCRP of ICMR for the last one decade, the oral cancers have been more or less stable except for men at Madras which have shown a slight increase. Tobacco chewing is one of most important cause of oral cancer. The changes in a occurance of oral cancer are expected to reflect the change in tobacco habits. The number of cases of oral cancer during 1995 were 52,489 which have shown a slight increase to 53,400 in 1996.

(d) Under the NCCP the Government has started schemes mentioned below for early detection, creating awareness and treatment of cancer.

(i) Augmentation of Regional Cancer Centres in various States/UTs.

(ii) Development of Oncology wings in identified Medical Colleges/Hospitals,

(iii) Setting up of Cobalt Therapy facilities in various parts of the country,

(iv) District Cancer Control Project,

(v) Financial assistance to NGOs for early detection and awareness activities.

Indo-Pak Talks

30. SHRI PARASRAM BHARDWAJ:

SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Pakistan will have to vacate POK" appearing in 'Times of India' dated June 26, 1997 wherein Pakistan Prime Minister had recognised Kashmir as a disputed territory for the first time during the just-concluded foreign secretary level talks between the two countries in Islamabad;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c) whether Indian Government has made clarification in this regard that our views on Jammu and Kashmir are very clear that Pakistan will have to vacate the Pakistan occupied Kashmir?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI KAMALA SINHA): (a) Yes Sir.